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RHMFISS/USNMR SHAPE BE PRIORITY

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 04 USNATO 000551

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/26/2019
TAGS: [KCFE](#) [NATO](#) [PARM](#) [PREL](#) [MCAP](#) [MASS](#) [MARR](#) [XG](#) [ZK](#)
SUBJECT: NATO/VCC: NOVEMBER 16-17 VCC AND EXPERTS

REF: STATE 117727

Classified By: D/POLAD Alejandro "Hoot" Baez for reasons 1.4(B)&(D).

¶1. (S/REL NATO) Summary: At the Verification Coordination Committee (VCC) and VCC meeting of Experts on 16-17 November, the U.S. secured Allied agreement to conduct one Vienna Document 1999 (VD99) evaluation in the Russian Federation and VD99 inspections in Belarus, Kazakhstan, Finland and Switzerland. The U.S. also secured one guest slot on two inspections to Kyrgyzstan and one inspection to Turkmenistan. The U.S. also exchanged guest slots with Norway for inspections in Belarus (US to lead) and Russia (Norway to lead).

¶2. (S/REL NATO) Summary cont'd: Most Allies agreed in principle that Allies should plan to use inspections in the Russian Federation, Belarus, and Kazakhstan for the purpose of inspecting significant military activities. All nations that secured inspections for these three countries agreed either to schedule their inspections for later in the calendar year -- when Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan have historically held such activities -- or to hold their inspection(s) in reserve until details of the timing of such activities are announced. The International Staff (IS) requested that nations forward their schedules to the IS by December 1. The Alliance will begin the process of deconflicting VD99 verification schedules at the meeting of Experts on December 17.

¶3. (S/REL NATO) Summary cont'd: The IS reported that Georgia had requested that NATO coordinate VD99 activities in Georgia so that they take place in the early part of calendar year ¶2010. Georgia also asked if NATO could share Allies' coordinated bids for verification activities in Georgia. Canada, the United Kingdom, Lithuania and Estonia said they had also been approached by Georgia in capitals with similar requests. While no one reported responding positively to Georgia's request, during the VCC, the Czech Republic, Estonia, and Lithuania announced that they planned to conduct their activities in calendar weeks 4, 2, and 5, respectively.

¶4. (C/REL NATO) Summary cont'd: In the VCC, several Allies advocated for the VCC to formally task Experts to review "VD99 Implementation." During the ensuing discussion, Allies proposed a range of tasking parameters, from an open-ended tasker to review implementation, to having Experts analyze the assessment of VD99 that Russia distributed in conjunction with the 2009 Annual Implementation Assessment (AIAM) Meeting in Vienna. Several delegations, including the U.S. Del, questioned whether Allies could hold a productive discussion

on such a tasker absent details as to its goal, output, and duration. While no one volunteered to draft a specific proposal, the IS said it would consult with interested Allies to draft a proposal that could be discussed in January at the next meeting of the VCC. End Summary.

ALLIES SCRAMBLE FOR LIMITED ACTIVITIES IN KEY COUNTRIES

15. (C/REL NATO) The main task of the November 16 VCC meeting of Experts -- to deconflict national bids to conduct VD99 verification activities in 2010 -- was completed with relative ease with the exception of the allocation of activities in Russia. Allies submitted nine primary bids for evaluation visits and seven primary bids for inspections in Russia. Further complicating deconfliction of evaluation bids for Russia was the fact that Russia had notified participating States (pS) (CBM/RU/09/148/F47/O) that it had reduced the number of its units in the zone of application for CSBMs to 107, resulting in a decrease of the number of available evaluation quotas from three to two. (Note: In Russia's evaluation quota announcement for 2009, the number of units was 167 and the evaluation quota was three visits (CBM/RU/08/156/F47/O).) End Note.

16. (S) The U.S., Germany, Turkey, UK, Italy, Poland and Lithuania indicated strong initial interest for the two evaluation quotas. By late afternoon, the U.S., Germany and Turkey remained locked in contention, with the remaining bidders negotiating for alternate targets or for guest

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inspector positions. Lithuania dropped its bid for the Russia evaluation in exchange for a position as a guest inspector on the U.S. inspection in Kazakhstan. With Allies near deadlock late in the day, the U.S. withdrew its primary inspection bid to Russia and offered interested Allies two guest evaluator positions on the U.S. team, which Latvia and Italy accepted. Germany insisted on retaining two positions on its team. Turkey followed the U.S. lead and offered two guest positions, leaving Germany isolated. Germany finally opted to accept one position on the Turkish team and defer to its alternate bid for a quota in Tajikistan. While less contentious, securing bids for quotas in Belarus and Kazakhstan also required Allies to offer up positions for guest inspectors. At final tally, the U.S. secured the following VD99 verification activities in 2010:

--One evaluation in Russia with guest inspectors from Latvia and Italy. (Note: Russia was a U.S. primary bid and the main objective in negotiations. End Note.)

--Four inspections as lead: Belarus with a guest inspector from Norway; Kazakhstan with a guest inspector from Lithuania; Finland; and Switzerland. (Note: Kazakhstan was a U.S. primary bid and Belarus was an alternate. Finland and Switzerland were selected on the basis of their respective notifications of military exercises.)

--Three additional positions for guest inspectors: Kyrgyzstan with Belgium, Kyrgyzstan with Canada and Turkmenistan with Belgium.

NOT EVERYONE COMPLETELY SATISFIED

17. (C/REL NATO) Monday's negotiation was the first deconfliction session held since Allies adopted their Implementation Coordination procedures in February 2009. According to those procedures, Allies are to review their deconfliction procedures annually in order to determine whether they should be amended based on experience from the previous year. During the negotiations, a number of Allies

expressed various concerns over the progress of deconfliction. Specifically:

- Several Allies suggested that pS inspection and evaluation history should be taken into account when deconflicting activities between competing bidders. Germany, France and Italy, among others, either explicitly or implicitly referred to this during negotiations over allocation of activities in Russia. France and Germany submitted specific language for a revision of the implementation procedures to take into account Allies' inspection/evaluation histories. The IS is expected to distribute this proposed revision prior to the Experts meeting in January. (Comment: Germany repeatedly and explicitly referred to the fact that the U.S. had visited Russia in the last two years and, therefore, should withdraw its primary evaluation bid. While others refrained from mentioning the U.S. specifically, it was clear that Italy and France agreed with Germany in principle. Such arguments, however, tend to marginalize national interests in favor of a perception of fair distribution of evaluation and inspection opportunities. End Comment.)

- Several Allies complained that an Ally wishing to exercise its right of priority for an evaluation or inspection in a country for which it had lost an opportunity to conduct the same activity the previous year (because of an uncoordinated partner activity) should be required to list that country as a primary bid if the pS wanted to have priority. (Comment: This suggestion was made as a result of the U.S. dropping its primary inspection bid for Russia as part of the solution to the deconfliction of Russian evaluations, and subsequently requesting to exercise its right of priority for its alternate inspection bid for Belarus. While some Allies objected to this move in spirit, all recognized that current implementation procedures do not address this issue and contain no such restriction. End Comment.)

- Other issues raised included: Denmark noted concern over how late the IS would accept changes to national bids before

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the deconfliction meeting; Norway suggested Allies only submit primary bids in advance of deconfliction; Germany suggested Allies agree on how to proceed in the absence of one or more Allies, (Note: Latvia did not attend on the morning of the first day, which caused allocation of the evaluation visits in Russia to be deferred until the afternoon. End Note.) The Czech Republic suggested strengthening the role of alternative bids, and Belgium suggested a two-part bidding submission.

BLOCKING RUSSIAN VERIFICATION ACTIVITIES IN GEORGIA?

18. (S) Per reftel, U.S. Rep Meyer noted Georgia's request for the U.S. to conduct VD99 verification activities in Georgia in early 2010. Meyer encouraged Allies to report on similar activity by the next VCC. The Chair (Wiederholz) reported that Georgia had approach the IS to ask whether NATO would consider coordinating VD99 verification activities in order to exhaust Georgian quotas in early 2010. Georgia also requested that the IS share with Georgia NATO's coordinated bids. Canada, the UK, Lithuania and Estonia also noted that they had been approached by Georgia in capitals with similar requests. While no one reported responding positively to Georgia's request, when the IS asked Allies to provide preliminary information on 2010 verification activities scheduling, the Czech Republic, Estonia, and Lithuania announced that they planned to conduct their activities in calendar weeks 4, 2, and 5, respectively.

REVIEWING VD99 PLAYS PROMINENTLY IN THE VCC

¶9. (C/REL NATO) During the VCC meeting on 17 November, the VCC Chair (Parker) announced that the VCC Experts Terms of Reference (TOR) had passed silence. Sparked by a question as to whether the VCC should schedule a two-day meeting of experts in March following the AIAM, Canada initiated an extended discussion on whether Allies should conduct a review of VD99. Canada, in keeping with the new TOR, initiated the discussion by calling for the VCC to provide VCC Experts with a formal tasking to review VD99 implementation procedures. (Comment: Canada opposed a formal terms of reference for VCC Experts, arguing that experts should be given the freedom to discuss any implementation topic they want without the need for specific authorization. End Comment.)

¶10. (C/REL NATO) Norway and Denmark renewed their call for the Experts to conduct a chapter-by-chapter review of VD99. Norway argued that the current proposal by Russia and Belarus for a draft Ministerial decision on the VD99, which would task the Forum for Security Cooperation (FSC) to conduct a review of VD99, is under discussion in Vienna. Proposals for technical adjustments to VD99 also are under discussion. Norway (and Canada) pointed out that the VCC should be ahead of this and that VD99 issues should be discussed in Brussels among the experts prior to being discussed in Vienna.

¶11. (C/REL NATO) In the ensuing discussion, Canada proposed that the VCC to formally task VCC Experts to review the provisions of VD99 and to analyze the assessment of VD99 that the Russian Federation distributed in March in conjunction with the AIAM. U.S. Del, questioned whether Allies could hold a productive discussion on such a tasker absent details as to its goal, output, and duration. U.S. Del also deployed the points in guidance (Ref A) to dispel perception that the current debate in Vienna over Russia's proposal for an OSCE Ministerial Decision formally tasking FSC to review VD99 necessitates immediate action by VCC Experts. At the end of the discussion the Chair (Parker) said his staff would consult with interested Allies to draft a proposal that could be discussed in January at the next meeting of the VCC.

OTHER BUSINESS

¶12. (SBU) Training: The IS reported that NATO School Oberammergau proposed that Allies consider developing a seminar/orientation course (one-off) on ACFE. The S-564 Data

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Exchange Course will be rescheduled from April to later in the year.

¶13. (SBU) NATO School has proposed that Racviac host one of NATO's VD 99 courses in 2010. While an unusual request, the school reported that allowing this course to be held elsewhere would ensure that NATO would not have to cancel any courses because of increased demand for lodging in 2010 from tourists visiting Oberammergau for the "Passion Play." Racviac has agreed to fund any additional costs and has agreed that the course will be run by NATO. Racviac is requesting 10 slots for their personnel, although it is unclear whether these slots would decrease the number of slots available to Allies. The IS is expected to resolve this question and issue a VCC draft decision under silence in the coming weeks.

¶14. (C/REL NATO) Ukrainian T-84s: The IS had approached Georgia and Ukraine about recent media reports alleging a shipment of T-84 tanks from Ukraine to Georgia. Both countries, after checking with capitals, reported that there was no such transfer. Subsequent to this inquiry, in late October, a member of the NATO Standardization Agency, (former VCC Experts Chair Lt. Col. Paul in den Bosch, NLAR,) was in Georgia and reported seeing at least 12 T-84 tanks loaded on rail cars in central Georgia.

¶15. (SBU) CFE Inspections: The IS announced that Ukraine offered, as it had last year, three more "additional paid inspections" for a total of nine next Treaty year.

¶16. (SBU) Georgian Helicopter Overflight: Canada noted its concern with Georgia's practice of denying helicopter overflights for VD99 inspection. (Note: Canada first raised this concern at the September VCC, noting that they had been denied overflight during a VD 99 inspection. During subsequent mil-mil consultations at the level of Heads of verification, Georgia admitted that it does not provide helicopter overflight as a matter of practice and that no one had raised the issue in the past. End Note.) Canada advocated for a unified NATO position, including agreed text that Allies could include on official reports. Several Allies indicated they had had similar experience with Georgia, as well as other partners, but noted that in some instances this practice could be clearly linked to a lack of resources. With the exception of France, Canada's proposal for an Alliance position drew little support. Denmark, however, commented that Canada could raise this issue either at the Heads of Verification meeting in December or at the AIAM in March.

¶17. (SBU) Open Skies in Southern Russia: Norway announced that it had flown an Open Skies mission in southern Russia. The mission routing took Norway over Chechnya and along the Russia-Georgia border. Norway reported that, uncharacteristically, weather during the legs and resulting photography were relatively good.

¶18. (SBU) Canada announced that it would raise at the next VCC the question of whether Allies expect partner countries to be fully compliant with CFE and VD 99 during above quota, bilateral and/or training activities.
DAALDER